



SOUTH WILLAMETTE Street Improvement Plan

Meeting Summary

Community Forum #2: Evaluate the Alternatives

Wednesday, February 27th, 6:00-8:00 pm, South Eugene High School, Eugene, Oregon

Overview

At the second of three community forums, the public learned about six alternatives for redesigning Willamette Street between 24th and 32nd Avenues, asked questions, and shared views on which three alternatives should be chosen for further study. The study aims to help South Willamette Street become a vibrant urban corridor accessible by bicycle, foot, car, and bus. The area includes residential, commercial, and mixed uses, and has six intersections being studied over about a ¾ mile stretch.

The large cafeteria at South Eugene High School was filled to capacity with over 300 participants: almost double the number of participants that attended the first forum. The public listened carefully to the alternatives and was respectful and thoughtful in asking questions and sharing a wide range of opinions. After meeting in small groups to discuss the alternatives, participants completed Input Forms to indicate which three alternatives they prefer to forward for further study. The meeting ended with a large group discussion.

When making the decision about which alternatives to study further, the City considers several elements, including:

- Comments from stakeholder meetings
- The results of Community Forum #2
- Email and phone comments to City staff
- Technical issues and how each alternative meets the Project Criteria
- Review and concurrence by the project Technical Advisory Committee

For more information, or to view the slideshow presentation or Forum #2 Appendix, please visit the website at <http://www.eugene-or.gov/SWillametteStreet>. The files are located in Project Documents, upper left section of the webpage.

Results of the Public Input Forms

285 People signed-in at the meeting and **301** Input Forms were filled out (see the end of this document for a sample Input Form). Of the Input Forms, **114** checked off alternatives without comments or adaptations, and **187** included adaptations or written comments.

Question #1: Please check the 3 alternatives that you would like the City to evaluate in more depth. Results:

- Alternative 3:** 3-Lane with bike lanes (208 preferences)
 - Alternative 4:** 3-Lane with buffered bike lanes (142 preferences)
 - Alternative 5:** 3-Lane with wide sidewalks (139 preferences)
 - Alternative 6:** 2-Lane with bike lanes, median & roundabout (113 preferences)
 - Alternative 1:** 4-Lane (97 preferences)
 - Alternative 2:** 4-Lane with center left-turn lane (83 preferences)
- There were 3 "I don't know's"

Question #2: Are there modifications you suggest to the above checked alternatives (such as width of lanes, sidewalk, etc.)? Results:

For details, please review Forum #2 Appendix: Input Form Comments. Written comments from the Input Forms were sorted into three categories: Modifications, Questions, and Comments. Then, the input was sorted according to topic. Following are reflections on the written input:

Suggested Modifications

Alternative	Total Comments	Topics Addressed
1	10	varied
2	7	varied
3	23	19 suggestions on lane width or bike lanes
4	17	10 on lane width or bike lanes, 7 on sidewalk issues
5	45	24 on cycle track ideas, 7 on sidewalk issues
6	22	varied
Mixed	22	varied
All	100	27 on pedestrian or sidewalk issues 16 on transit 9 on utilities 9 on parallel bike route

Questions

Topics varied widely.

Comments

Alternative 6 generated the most comments (16), perhaps because it was challenging to conceptualize. Bike and pedestrian issues were the most common comment topics (28%)

Detailed Summary of the Meeting

Kurt Corey, the City's Public Works Director, gave opening comments of confidence in the team and gratitude for community turn out. Project Manager Chris Henry discussed funding and the decision-making process for the project, "Tonight we will look at six alternatives and then we will narrow them down to three." Mr. Henry said that asking for public input will help the City be good stewards of public dollars by not wasting time

exploring alternatives that are not supported. Chris Watchie, Public Involvement Specialist, briefly reviewed 150 years of history of Willamette Street. She showed slides of old photos of the street illustrating its evolution. Robin Hostick, City of Eugene Senior Planner, described the long-range concept for the street. He showed a slide illustrating how street-side development may change in the future due to future redevelopment. Ellen Teninty, Public Involvement Specialist, asked participants to use this forum as an opportunity to think beyond their personal experience and more holistically about all users and broader considerations.

Scott Mansur, Project Manager from DKS Associates, explained the framework for the alternatives that have been developed. He described the stakeholder outreach process, the first community forum, Technical Advisory Committee feedback, and elected official involvement. He described the alternatives screening process, the study corridor, and each alternative design option in detail. Peter Coffey, Principal of DKS Associates, reviewed the screening criteria evaluation and findings that have taken place so far and the screening that will occur for the next three alternatives.

Questions on the alternatives:

Audience Member: You said you would talk about capacities tonight. What capacities will these plans cover?

Response: Capacity refers to the potential for each street design alternative to accommodate the demand for mobility from motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians, and bus riders. We won't have those details until we perform more in-depth analysis.

Audience Member: What is the measurement of the sidewalk right now?

Response: Up to and less than 9 feet of width.

Audience Member: Will you also be taking into account the traffic pattern changes on related streets? Will this be a part of your study? Specifically Lincoln, Jefferson and other streets located in that area.

Response: It is beyond our scope to go into that level of detail.

Audience Member: Are the traffic counts higher going South than North?

Response: Yes (explains and includes discussion of traffic patterns).

Audience Member: Do any of these plans address left turn signals at intersections?

Response: Yes.

Audience Member: Is there any standard for a sidewalk where pedestrians and cyclists use just the sidewalks?

Response: Alternative 5, and a cycle track could do that.

Audience Member: Who pays and how are they assessed?

Response: There are multiple funding sources for any street improvement. (explains funding opportunities and sources).

Audience Member: Will the 3-lane options hold the current capacity that the street does now?

Response: It reduces the capacity, however, it should be adequate depending on the number and location of driveway accesses.

Website: eugene-or.gov/SWillametteStreet. *Contact:* Chris Henry, Chris.C.Henry@ci.eugene.or.us, 541-682-8472, Public Works Engineering, 99 E. Broadway, Ste. 400, Eugene, OR 97401

Audience Member: How are you measuring current capacity for bikes? How about for Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)?

Response: Explains the measure and process. Notes that the trend is that people are driving less.

Audience Member: Will businesses have to give up any of their parking spaces or any of their property for these alternatives?

Response: Largely not.

Audience Member: Can you describe these alternatives by comparing them to other existing streets in Eugene?

Response: Somewhat. Describes comparisons for consideration, and the project team will try to find more examples.

Audience Member: Regarding option 6, is it certain that eliminating traffic signals will reduce capacity?

Response: Option 6 is the safest. The roundabouts have the capacity to accommodate the motor vehicle demand on the intersection.

Audience Member: If driveways will have to be eliminated, who will cover the cost?

Response: We are not at that level of detail yet, however that is an important consideration that we will look at in the future.

The group moved to a 20-minute small group discussion. Group instructions:

Review each alternative as a group. Ask questions. Talk to people with different points of view to understand perspectives. Table materials:

- 11x17 copies of 6 alternatives
- Half sheet input forms
- Flip chart paper and pens to draw, record group ideas if desired

We do not expect you to come to agreement as a group or record your conversation during this time. The goal is to help you make an informed decision about which alternatives you think the City should study further. The flip chart paper and pens are there if you feel inspired to draw or write ideas. This is an opportunity for each participant to study the alternatives, ask questions, listen to different perspectives, and formulate your own opinion.

Participants then moved into a full group discussion:

Audience Member: I was wondering why we are not looking at a 2-way cycle track like on Alder Street?

Response: It was reviewed for the goals of the project and how it impacts the other modes. Other options were developed that provide a balance of access, mobility, and safety for users of the street.

Audience Member: How does the number of trips per day affect the alternatives?

Response: The number of bicyclists is not a factor in calculating the level of service. Bicycle level of service (as well as the pedestrian experience) is dependent on the speed, volume, and proximity of adjacent motor vehicle traffic.

Audience Member: Cycle tracks would make it more difficult for cyclists to get to different destinations. Is there anything that is not a part of the pedestrian master plan?

Response: The Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan (PBMP) identified the need for bike lanes and parallel routes in the corridor. The alternatives presented respond to the PBMP guidance.

Audience Member: One of the primary problems is that the sidewalks are too narrow and the alternatives, except for number 5, all are going to require expanding beyond the necessary profile.

Response: All of the options work within the public right of way.

Audience Member: [During small group discussion] options 3 through 6 concerned our table about conflicts with busses. Could you talk about that?

Response: We will look at opportunities for bus turnouts in next analysis.

Audience Member: I'm concerned about your bike counts because many of us use the alleyways as an alternative. How is the planning for the northern section going to work with these alternatives?

Response: The project to the north (pavement preservation between 19th and 24th avenues) provides the opportunity to connect the bike lane system on 18th Avenue and further north on Willamette Street to the bike lane system on 24th Avenue. So, that project serves a need independent of what occurs between 24th and 32nd avenues.

Audience Member: What are your criteria for the number of driveways allowed?

Response: Fewer are better. Reducing the number of driveway conflicts improves safety for all the users of the street and also improves the flow of motor vehicle traffic.

Audience Member: What is the collision rate?

Response: It is almost twice as high as we would expect for similar streets in Oregon (5.2 collisions per million vehicle miles travelled versus 2.91 collisions per million vehicle miles statewide).

Audience Member: Are there plans that you have for Amazon Parkway to divert some of this traffic?

Response: We don't have specific plans for Amazon Parkway but we will look at what diversion may happen with the alternatives.

Audience Member: When will there be an analysis of the economic consequences for any of these alternatives on the 120 businesses that rely upon the traffic?

Response: In the refinement of the alternatives "tier 2 analysis."

Audience Member: Instead of having bus pullouts, the center turn lane could be striped to allow the traffic to pass the bus at stops.

Response: Yes and they will look into that. It's certainly possible.

Audience Member: I did my own count and there were 250 cars and 1 bicycle go by in 15 minutes [within the study area on Willamette Street].

Response: The project team is following established City policies to provide for a balanced transportation system that provides options for people to meet their mobility needs.

Audience Member: How much would the gridlock be with option 6? Will it be a five-minute delay or a half an hour delay?

Response: There will be a delay and we will look at the specifics in the next analysis.

Audience Member: The street itself should cater to all modes since it is public money.

Response: A balanced transportation system will serve all users. That is our goal and our policy guidance.

Audience Member: I'm wondering if we could consider encouraging Eugene Police to enforce the rules on Willamette Street?

Response: I shared with the police today that people have been concerned about the travel speeds on the street.

Audience Member: Is there a difference between people commuting on Willamette or people stopping and shopping?

Response: Our grant funding constrains our work but we will try to estimate that.

Audience Member: If you build it, will they [bicycles] come?

Response: We don't have the ability to tell, however we could do some case studies with other communities to compare what happened to them and what they saw afterwards.

Audience Member: I would be scared to go through a roundabout as a cyclist or pedestrian. Do the roundabouts have safety accommodations for them?

Response: We will look at ways to make people more comfortable using them. There are two options for how a roundabout would be designed for bicycle use.

Audience Member: There are a lot of things in our master planning processes over the years. Which one of these alternatives will point us in the direction of what we have already said we want?

Response: The plans say what we want. They do not say how and that is why we are here.

Audience Member: Why not have bikes on the sidewalks?

Response: Typically we do not have bikes share where there are a lot of driveways. Pedestrians do not feel safe with bikes on the sidewalk. Cars do not see bikes when they are pulling out of driveways.

Audience Member: Surveys should be done to talk to residents, asking them what should be done to make them want to walk it more.

Response: We are looking at that information in some other ways.

Audience Member: Concern over decline in availability of fossil fuel. How are you incorporating this into your study long term?

Response: By giving people options for how they travel.

Chris Watchie wraps up the meeting by thanking participants for coming, reminding participants to leave their opinion forms on the tables for collection, reviewing the next steps, and taking final questions. Meeting ends at 8:00pm.

Example of Public Input Form

South Willamette Street Improvement Plan Community Forum #2: Evaluate the Alternatives

1. Please check the 3 alternatives that you would like the City to evaluate in more depth:
 - 1: 4-Lane
 - 2: 4-Lane with Center Left-turn Lane
 - 3: 3-Lane with Bike Lanes
 - 4: 3-Lane with Buffered Bike Lanes
 - 5: 3-Lane with Wide Sidewalks
 - 6: 2-Lane with Bike Lanes, Median & Roundabouts
 - I don't know
2. Are there modifications you suggest to the above checked alternatives (such as width of lanes, sidewalk, etc.)? If so, please describe on the back of this sheet. Suggestions that expand the project beyond the current right of way (60 feet) cannot be included in the short-term.